



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

**Russ Chew 1-800-FAA-NEWS Phone Message  
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**Hello, this is Russ Chew with this week's update for February 3rd.**

This week, ATO Finance released this year's revised budget allowances, which have been updated from the latest adjustments provided by our budget folks within each ATO line of business. As expected, the 1% government-wide rescission will indeed impact ATO's budget very hard, and these allowances will mean that spending this year will be even tighter than last.

We've made a lot of progress over the last two years, now having reduced our net non-safety staffing overhead by more than 1600 full-time people – which is over 14% from when we started. And although traffic growth was less than last year's forecast, we still managed to reach our goal of improving the productivity of our safety staffing by 3% – which includes controllers, technicians, and first line supervisors.

But now almost 4 months into this fiscal year, we have calculated that our efficiency improvements are still not enough to overcome the budget shortfall caused by the rescission and other unfunded operational requirements. Our priorities remain with hiring that is in line with our controller workforce plan, the PASS Technical Agreement, and displaced Flight Service personnel. We will be working to minimize non-operational and non-essential travel and training; but we will not sacrifice key management training and meetings needed for us to manage our operation more efficiently.

What this means is that we must push even harder to reduce our overhead and unnecessary operational costs – 75% of which is pay and compensation. Following similar offers made in November and December, we announced voluntary early retirement offers last week to eligible bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit employees at specific field locations outside the regional offices. You can view the announcement, a fact sheet, and an application form by going to our ATO Online website. We expect to offer this to selected regional office employees within the next few weeks.

Because our facilities and equipment budget for this year is not as tight as our operational budget, we can continue to replace some of our aging infrastructure.

We've just commissioned four Model 11 Airport Surveillance Radars (or ASR-11). These systems provide digitized radar data for our existing Automated Radar Terminal Systems (ARTS) and the new Standard Terminal Automation Replacement Systems (STARS).

The ASR-11 at Billings, MT was commissioned January 13th; the Columbia, MO ASR-11 was commissioned January 19th; the one at Merced, CA was commissioned on January 24th; and the ASR-11 at Stockton, CA was commissioned on January 27th.

Also this week, I met with ATO employees at the offices of the National Aeronautical Charting group. Once known as N-A-C-O, now it's known as N-A-C-G. This group updates, publishes and distributes the charts and publications needed by pilots operating in U.S. airspace. What many do not know is that this small, highly skilled group is a critical part of our Technical Ops service unit, and is in the Office of Aviation Systems Standards. Thanks to Terry Laydon and Dave Dudish for organizing a great visit. Keep up the good work out there.

As I mentioned last week, we will be recognizing FAA employees for their outstanding achievements during last year's busy hurricane season. On February 8th in eight cities, FAA executives will present awards to more than one thousand five hundred employees – many of them volunteers – who contributed to rescue, relief and recovery efforts.

The Administrator will address employees from New Orleans and the Deputy Administrator will be in Atlanta. I'll be taking part in the ceremony at Oklahoma City. Other FAA executives will present awards in Miami, Fort Worth, Houston, and Washington DC.

On a final note, the CFC fundraiser is over, and I want to extend one more thank you to those of who contributed. Whether you donated your money, time, talents, or all three, you should feel proud to be part of this worthy effort.

That's it for this week. Thanks for listening, and I'll talk to you again next week.